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SATURDAY
JULY 3, 1954

Viewed several of the fine Romanesque churches in Poitiers. Then, in Michel's keeping, we motored toward Angoulême, lingering over lunch in a restaurant, well worthy of its one Michelin star, in the village of Chaunay. Its specialties were omelet with truffles, and river trout with almonds.

We strolled around Angoulême, examining its ramparts and churches, which merit their fame.

We passed through Cognac in the course of the afternoon, but did not linger to see the birthplace of François I^er (the Chateau de Cognac), now the headquarters of the Otard brandy company. It was in its superb cellars that, a few years ago, I spoke to the hospitable producers and distillers of the region.

Arrived at Royan, we lodged at the Hotel du Golf. At eighty-thirty we descended forty miles from Royan on the Chateau La Roche Courbon, where our host, Max Brusset, and his associates in the festival, entertained some two hundred and fifty visitors at dinner. This mediaeval chateau, once widely publicized by Pierre Loti, is really glorious, not only for its picturesqueness as a building but for the beauty of its landscaping. To my mind it is not surpassed by any chateau of the Loire, and, in fact, excels almost all of them.

We dined in a building (which once served as a theatre) separate from the Chateau. Caviar from the local Gironde sturgeon (and it was delicious) was only the beginning of a feast of magnificent proportions. I sat between Marie Brusset and Lydia Deterding. Most unusual was the dearth of speeches. In fact, there was but one, delivered by Comte Herbemont, the President of the Confrérie of Compagnons du Pineau.

Afterwards, we made merry in the Chateau and gardens. A dance had been planned on an out-of-door platform festooned with roses. Suzy Solidor was to sing, and other entertainment had been readied for us. Unhappily, rain came,

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and I, as well as other diplomats, were made members of the worshipful order of Pineau in a drizzle. Johnnie Amodeo lent me his robes for the occasion - a blue cloak with yellow lining, a wide shawl with pendant insignia. Some verses of Ronsard were recited. I drank Pineau, and responded, but not in Ronsard strophes.

At three o'clock we were in bed at the Golf Hotel.

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